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Lithuania wants free Baltic state

MOSCOW (AP) — A Lithuanian lawmaker Friday challenged the Kremlin in front of the entire Soviet parliament to begin talks leading to full independence for his Baltic republic.

Lithuania "was forcibly included in the Soviet Union," said deputy Kazimeras Motieka. If the Kremlin is serious about reform, he said, it should move to eliminate the results of the crimes of dictator Josef Stalin, who annexed the Baltic region.

"As a person empowered by the voters of Lithuania, I call upon the government of the U.S.S.R. to begin official negotiations in the near future with fully empowered representatives of Lithuania on the liquidation of Stalinist crimes and on the restoration of the independence of the Lithuanian state," Motieka told the Congress of People's Deputies, or parliament.

Drawing a parallel with Romania, where President Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown Friday, Motieka said: "We also have a dictator: Moscow. If the Soviet Union is building a government of laws, well, legality and occupation don't go together."

The challenge by Motieka, a lawyer, came two days after the Lithuanian Communist Party voted to declare itself independent from its mother party in Moscow.

It was the first time a delegate from one of the restive Baltic republics used the national parliament to advance demands for full independence, and it marked the latest step in the Baltic progression from

calls for sovereignty to outright secession.

After Motieka's speech, Lithuanian deputy Vytautas Landsbergis said the Lithuanian parliament had already created a commission that is working on the steps necessary for the Baltic state to achieve independence. Motieka's appeal stemmed from that commission's work, said Landsbergis, head of the Lithuanian people's front, known as Sajudis.

President Mikhail S. Gorbachev responded sharply to the Lithuanian Communist Party's decision Wednesday to separate from the Soviet Communist Party.

Gorbachev sent a message to Lithuanian Communists on Thursday saying their decision could only be assessed "as a step aimed at the split of the Lithuanian Communist Party from the Soviet Communist Party."

His message said the ruling Politburo would convene an emergency meeting soon to address the move.

Landsbergis said he thought the Lithuanian Communist Party's decision to secede was a normal "step in perestroika."

Delegates from the Baltic republics have been struggling for the last two days over Congress' plans to create a committee to rule on conflicts between local laws passed in the republics and national Soviet law.

Baltic deputies object that because they were unlawfully incorporated into the Soviet Union, they should not be forced to comply with Moscow's laws.

Gato